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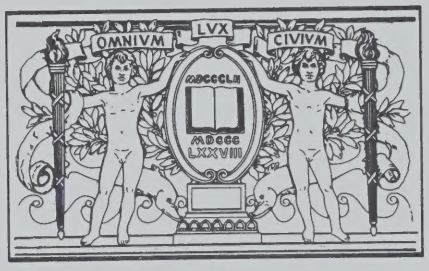

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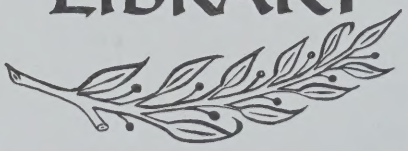

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Boston Public Library

PROPOSAL FOR THE NEW BUILDING

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Proposal for the New Building

General Observations

What are the Aims to be envisaged in the B.P.L's Building Program for the Central Library?

1. To achieve an improved and more efficient operation of the entire B.P.L. system

   -- the limitations of the present Central Library building do not help in achieving an efficient operation in any way approaching an optimum sense

   -- also the library staff has long had unsatisfactory working quarters behind the scenes

   -- the New Building must provide improvement

      -- in the name of efficiency of operations

      -- in the name of better treatment for the members of the library staff

2. To achieve an improved and clearer working of the B.P.L. from the point of view of the user

   -- the Present Building has never been satisfactory in its facilities either (a) for the large-public-library type for home reading and for reference use at the intermediate level or (b) for the exploitation of the B.P.L's great reference and research collections in depth

   -- extensive experience and study have led to the conclusion that the two cannot be successfully intermingled with a hope of success

   -- this lack of clarity in the presentation of its facilities, services, and resources has not been helpful to the reputation of the B.P.L.

   -- clarity of presentation of what the B.P.L. offers has become an immediate and prime need

How can these Aims best be achieved?

1. By housing the B.P.L's internal service operations in a portion of the New Building

   -- in quarters designed specifically for clear and direct departmental relationships, adequate work-flow, and

up-to-date management procedures

-- for this the entire southeast quadrant of the New Building at all levels should be allocated

-- this would correspond, to varying extents at the different levels, to the space that will become available from the demolition of the present Annex

2. By clarifying the B.P.L's presentation of its services to the reader by putting the two main types of its services into separate buildings

-- its "general library services" and its "reference and research services" need to be in recognizably separate locations of their own

-- one type of service in the Present Building and one type of service in the New Building

-- but intermingled in neither building

-- which should be in the New Building and which in the Present Building?

-- the answer is dictated by the kind and type of space needs

-- the "reference and research services" cannot be fitted in their entirety, as they need to be, into the Present Building

-- no central core of bookstack is possible in the Present Building, either as to location or as to adequacy of size for an integrated collection of two million or more volumes

-- lack of bookstack space adjacent to the special subject department reading rooms hampers their operation seriously

-- sufficient reading room space for the appropriate number of special subject departments is not possible in the Present Building

-- the "general library services" can be fitted in their entirety into the Present Building, and a reallocation and rearrangement of space can be effected with a minninum of change to provide a reasonably acceptable provision of facilities

-- therefore the most practicable solution for achieving an optimum use of the Present Building and the New Building as a composite whole for the B.P.L. system seems to be to use

-- the Present Building for

(a) the public service units of the B.P.L's Division of Home Reading and Community Services

(b) an intermediate level of reference facilities for those not engaged in advanced investigations--the general user, students, and others

(c) the Headquarters, Offices and the General Library Services of the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Public Library Service

-- the New Building for

(a) the B.P.L's internal service units for the B.P.L. system as a whole

(b) the B.P.L's Division of Reference and Research Services

(c) the Reference and Research Library Services in depth which the B.P.L. is expected to provide in behalf of the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Public Library Service Program

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<u>What may be the impact of potential electronic developments upon all of this?</u>

-- alertness to such potentialities is a necessity

-- new forms for the storage of knowledge are coming into existence

- microforms -- microfilms, microtexts, and others
- tapes
- computerized forms
- forms still unknown

-- these can revolutionize comcepts of space use

- both for operational needs
- and for storage of information

-- electronic procedures are clearly applicable to certain library operations (e.g., library procedural operations)

-- book purchasing and its records

- the B.P.L. was one of the earliest libraries to use I.B.M. procedures for this purpose, beginning back in 1934

-- serials records

- the B.P.L. is presently at the point at which it should explore the possibility of establishing a centralized Serials Section on a computerized basis

-- book catalogs for a system of branch libraries or a system of sub-regional centers in a regional library program are now possible of compilation on a practical basis by a combination of photographic and electronic methods

-- theoretically the vast card catalogs of the large research libraries (e.g., the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, the B.P.L., the Harvard Library, and the great university libraries) can be computerized

- however, the practical difficulties and the enormous economic costs will be stubborn of solution for a considerable time to come, if ever

-- electronic information retrieval for large library collections of the universal type will undoubtedly come too, but it seems likely to be considerably into the future before this will be realistically possible

-- there is nothing yet on the horizon to indicate its posibility either practically or economically for the universal type of library

-- it can be done, of course, and is being done, for certain subject fields (in limited subject areas in the sciences, e.g., metallurgy) or for certain types of literature (such as abstracts of medical journals, e.g., the MEDLARS project of the National Library of Medicine)

-- and it is particularly adaptable to the use of "processed" materials (i.e., materials not in published or printed book form)

-- but for unlocking the contents of universal library collections in book form the task is of such great magnitude in respect to size and practical difficulties that its bearing on library building planning is not a recognizable determinant at the present time or very likely for probably a considerable time to come

-- the possibility of reducing to a minimum the space needs of the large library with extensive collections is thus still in the dream stage

-- in any event readers and users of libraries cannot themselves be miniaturized or computerized

-- the users of libraries are increasing rapidly in number, notably so in the present period of increasing education in the midst of a population explosion

-- greatly increased reader space is needed for them, e.g., all new college and university library buildings are providing seating spaces for readers in enormous numbers

-- the B.P.L. in its turn needs to increase markedly its space provisions for readers, not only to take care of the developing demands for increased education but also to meet the increasing demands arising out of the regional library program

-- also, in any event, universal library collections in traditional book form will probably always be needed at major points geographically

-- even if there come into eventual existence national chains of computerized knowledge

-- psychological factors will probably still require books in their traditional form

-- the book as it has existed for the last 400 years still remains one of the best engineered items yet invented

-- the best **possible** forecast that can probably be made -- with a reasonable hope of avoiding costly error -- is that a B.P.L. building program can be embarked upon as proposed

-- however, alertness to electronic developments must continue

-- and maximum flexibility must be sought in the New Building to permit provision for evolving space uses that may not even have been thought of heretofore

-- action cannot be postponed to await eventual or final developments electronically or otherwise

-- the pressing need of the B.P.L. is for improved and increased space for the present and for the more or less immediate future

-- plenty of other libraries are not waiting but are planning and building along similar lines

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Is it a tenable concept to think of the public service portion of the New Building as the B.P.L's "Reference and Research Library"?

-- the large libraries with extensive universal collections permitting research in depth -- particularly the university libraries, but also a public library such as the New York Public Library -- are making the same sort of recognition as is here proposed for the B.P.L. in respect to separating there "intermediate reference services" from their "research library services" rather than keeping them intermingled

  -- Cornell made its recent new building (the Olin Library) its "research building" and made its old library building into its "undergraduate student library" (the Uris Library)

  -- Harvard did the reverse by making its old library building (Widener) its "research library" primarily for advanced work and erecting a new building as its undergraduate student library (Lamont)

  -- the New York Public Library is establishing a "students' library" in the upper floors of the Arnold Constable Building (which it owns) opposite its Main Building on Fifth Avenue, which latter it is thus freeing for use primarily as a "research library"

-- the B.P.L's Division of Reference and Research Services is likely to become in time the nucleus around which there will be developed the public Reference and Research Library Center for the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts under amended state-aid-to-public-libraries legislation in due course

  -- this was suggested in the report of the recent Verschoor-Bundy Survey undertaken on behalf of the Board of Library Commissioners of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

  -- it has long been recognized as a desirable development in most responsible library thinking in Massachusetts

  -- it is therefore important that the present planning for the New Building be of such scope and flexibility to permit a development of this sort if and when the time comes

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Will there be sufficient use of the Reference and Research Library Services proposed for the New Building to justify the allocation of a major portion of it to such use?

- doubt as to this has been expressed in certain quarters
- however, to turn in the opposite direction would be doubtful procedure, because of
  - the rapidly expanding student population at the graduate level, which will be
    - without adequate provision, either actual or even possible of achievement, in respect to library facilities for graduate work in most academic institutions in the Greater Boston area other than in the few that are already possessed of long-established resources
  - the immiment increase in the use of the B.P.L's resources for reference and research use in depth under the requirements of the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Public Library Service program
  - the potential demands upon the B.P.L. if and when it becomes the public Reference and Research Library Center for the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Boston Public Library

PROPOSAL FOR THE NEW BUILDING

SPACE DESIDERATA IN GENERAL

FOR THE USE OF THE NEW BUILDING

Proposal for the New Building

Space Desiderata in General for the Use of the New Building

(1) For the Internal Operations of the B.P.L System as a whole and (2) For the Reference and Research Services of the B.P.L's Division of Reference and Research Services and of the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Public Library Service

The First Desideratum is that the New Building be completely modular

- both horizontally and vertically
- a total of multiple horizontal levels (perhaps 10?)
    - 3 below street floor (Levels 1-3)
    - 3 at street floor and immediately above (Levels 4-6)
    - 3 at second floor and immediately above (Levels 7-9)
    - 1 at top floor (Level 10)
- three main floors in the public service area to correspond with
    - street floor level
        - at same level as street floor in Present Building
    - second floor level
        - at same level as second floor (Bates Hall floor) in Present Building
    - third floor level
        - at same level as third floor (top floor) in Present Building
- these several floor levels (in both the public service areas and the book stack area) to correspond in such fashion as to provide a maximum of flexibility for use
    - both at outset as well as potentially for the future
    - to be adaptable and interchangeable for use either as public service areas or internal operations areas or as bookstack areas

- areas for public service and for internal service operations

    - to be obtainable wherever and whenever necessary or desired

    - to be obtainable by combining levels in multiples

        e.g., in order to provide space and height for a public reading room, two (or more) horizontal levels are to be combined by omitting intervening floors in that area - there will be numerous instances in which this will need to be done

- other than for such public and internal service areas the building will become potentially, at all other points or levels, a central core of multiple horizontal levels of bookstack

The Second Desideratum is that the New Building be Adaptable for Varying Uses as circumstances may require

- the chief value of the proposed modularity will be flexibility to permit the use of space interchangeably between (a) space for public service use and/or internal operations use and (b) space for bookstack use in accord with changing conditions or evolving demands

The Third Desideratum is that the New Building have a Central Core of Bookstack

- the Present Building suffers heavily in that its entire central core - an indispensable area for a library building - is lost to any effective use

    - the courtyard is an esthetic achievement of the first rank

    - but the loss of the courtyard space results in major impairment to efficient library operation

- for a collection approaching two million volumes as the B.P.L's now does, with the promise of further increase, a large bookstack area is an unavoidable necessity

- such a large bookstack can provide maximum availability for effective use only if it is the central core around which the public service units can be located

The Fourth Desideratum is that the New Building be arranged to permit an Optimum Provision of Public Reading Rooms for the Special Subject Departments

- the size and the shape of the Present Building have precluded this
    - in certain areas of its greatest strength and holdings the B.P.L. has not been able to provide appropriate subject departments
    - it has, for example, no Literature and Languages Department, no History Department (except in embryonic form), no Religion and Philosophy Department, no Maps Department
    - it needs such for a proper and adequate exploitation of its great resources in these and other areas
- the New Building must include provision of Public Reading Rooms for the Special Subject Departments which the B.P.L. has already as well as for those additional subject areas for which such provision is indispensable for opening up the great resources possessed by the B.P.L.
- the optimum space provision for all of these would be around the periphery of the central core of bookstack
    - along the Boylston Street side
    - along the Exeter Street side
    - along the Blagden Street side
    - along the side adjacent to the Present Building

Boston Public Library

PROPOSAL FOR THE NEW BUILDING

SPECIFIC SPACE ALLOCATIONS

TO THE INDIVIDUAL UNITS

OF THE B.P.L's

DIVISION OF REFERENCE AND RESEARCH SERVICES

Proposal for the New Building

Street Floor

A central Main Hall

- containing the Public Catalog
- around which space will need to be provided for
  - the Officer-in-Charge of Reader Services
  - the General Reference Department
  - a Bibliographical Reference Section
- adjacent to the Main Hall and to the Public Entrance should be a Quick Information Department and also Charging Desks
- the Main Hall to be a point central to circulation in all directions, and it will be the point to which the user will turn to learn where to go if he does not already know in advance to which special subject department to turn

Special Subject Departments

- two related groups of special subject departments around the periphery of the Main Hall
  - the Social Sciences group

    Education Department (Parent-Teachers Room)
    Social Sciences Department
    Government Documents Department
    Business and Industry Department

  - the Science and Technology group

    Engineering Sciences and Patents
    Physical Sciences
    Biological Sciences

- with direct access to below-ground levels of central core of bookstack

A Periodicals and Newspaper Department

- to be adjacent to the west wing of the Present Building, in which will be housed the Newspaper Files and the Current Newspaper Room at the Stack 1 level
- with direct access to below-ground levels of central core of bookstack

A large Exhibition Hall

- to be adjacent to the northwest corner of the Present Building, in order to be part of the large complex of Meeting Rooms in the Present Building and the Auditorium in the basement levels of the New Building

- with interior entrances, from both the New Building and the Present Building

- with a separate exterior entrance in common with the Auditorium and the Meeting Rooms

- to be available for large exhibits of the sort which cannot at present be handled in the B.P.L., such as

  - the German Book Production exhibit

  - the Italian Michelangelo exhibit

  - the Kennedy Memorial Library exhibit

Proposal for the New Building

Second Floor

Special Subject Departments

- related groups of special subject departments around the periphery of the central core of bookstack

  - the Humanities group

    Religion - Philosophy - Psychology Department
    Literature and Languages Department
    History Department

  - special interest groups, such as

    a Nov Anglica Section
    a Hibernica Section
    a Judaica Section

  - a Maps Department

- with direct access to contiguous areas of bookstack

- all of those are departmental domains in which the B.P.L. has very large and extensive collections

  - the Present Building does not lend itself to setting up departmental units in these areas

  - and as a result the B.P.L. has not done very well in opening up its great holdings and providing appropriate staffs of specialists

Proposal for New Building

Third Floor

Special Subject Departments

- two separate groups of related departmental activities around the periphery of the central core of bookstack

Group I

- the Music Department
    - with a separate area for the B.P.L's music books and materials
    - with a separate room for the Allen A. Brown Collection of Music and Books
    - with a separate section for a reference collection of recordings (a consulting historical and listening collection rather than primarily a lending collection)
- Listening and Performing Rooms
    - for recordings
    - for piano and other instrumental music (large enough for the performance of quartets)

Group II

- the Fine Arts Department
    - with extensive shelving for its collections within its own departmental area as well as in contiguous bookstack areas
    - as great proximinity as possible to the Print Department (in Present Building on top floor along Blagden Street side) and to the Picture Collection located as described below
- the Picture Collection
    - to be located between the Print Department and the Fine Arts Department, with maximum access to both
- to be located preferably in the New Building next to the west wing of the Old Building

Proposal for the New Building

Basement Area

Auditorium

- to be located in northeast corner of Basement, utilizing all three below-ground levels
- with a separate entrance from Boylston Street in common with the Large Exhibition Hall and the Meeting Rooms in the northwest corner of the Present Building
- with direct connections to subway station

Exhibits Office

- with easy access to exhibition facilities in both New Building and Present Building
- with access to exhibits storage area

Photo Duplicating Services

- photostating
- microfilming
- Xerox and similar processes

Public Toilets

Proposal for the New Building

Central Core of Bookstack

Levels 1-3

- to be below ground

Levels 4-6

- to correspond with Street Floor and the space immediately above but below the Second Floor

Levels 7-9

- to correspond with Second Floor and the space immediately above but below the Third Floor

Level 10

- to correspond with Third Floor (the top floor)

Boston Public Library

PROPOSAL FOR THE NEW BUILDING

SPACE ALLOCATIONS IN GENERAL

FOR THE INTERNAL SERVICE OPERATIONS

FOR THE BPL SYSTEM AS A WHOLE

Proposal for the New Building

Space Allocations in General for the Internal Service Operations for the BPL System as a Whole

Centralization of Internal Service Operations

- for the BPL System as a whole
- to be centered in southeast quadrant of the New Building along the Blagden Street side

Access from Present Building (along Blagden Street side)

- to utilize present available levels
  - along Stack 2 (proposed Audio-Visual Department quarters)
  - along Stack 5 (proposed Headquarters Offices for the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Public Library Service
  - on top floor through proposed new quarters for Print Department
- variations in level between stack floors in Present Building and levels in New Building can be reconciled only through reconstruction of bookstack area in Present Building at a cost too great to be considered
    - therefore the few steps up at Stack 2 and at Stack 5 will have to be matched by a few steps down to the appropriate floor levels in the New Building
    - this will be of relatively little importance since these will not be primarily for public passage

Distribution by Floors in the New Building

First Floor (=Levels 4 & 5)

- Official & Union Catalogs
- Book processing units
  (book selection, cataloging & classification, serials, gifts & exchanges)
- Inter-Library Loan Office
- Telephone Reference Service

Second Floor (=Levels 7 & 8)

- Personnel Quarters
- Publications Department

Third Floor (= Level 10)

- Trustees' Office
- General Administrative Offices
- Business Offices
- Records, Files & Statistics

Basement (= Levels 1-3)

- Staff Facilities
- Shipping and Receiving, Stock and Supplies
- Binding Department
- Buildings Service units
- Utilities

Boston Public Library

PROPOSAL FOR THE NEW BUILDING

SPECIFIC SPACE ALLOCATIONS

TO THE INDIVIDUAL UNITS

OF THE INTERNAL SERVICE OPERATIONS

OF THE B.P.L. SYSTEM AS A WHOLE

Proposal for the New Building

First Floor

(Southeast quadrant and along Blagden Street)

Book Processing Departments (except Book Purchasing and Book Preparation Departments)

Official Catalogs

-- Official Catalog covering all units of the Reference Division

-- Union Catalog for the Home Reading Division (for Central Library, Branch Libraries, and Bookmobiles)

-- Union Catalog for the Regional Library Center and the Sub-Regional Centers of the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Public Library Service

Book Selection Departments

-- for both Home Reading & Reference and Research Services

-- with easy access to Official Catalogs

Cataloging and Classification Departments

-- for both Home Reading & Reference and Research Services

-- with easy access to all Official Catalogs and Public Catalog

Serials Section

-- a centralization of serials records for all units of the Reference Division

Gifts and Exchanges Section

-- with easy access to Book Selection Departments

-- with easy access to Official Catalogs

Inter-Library Loan Office

-- with easy access to Official Catalog and all Union Catalogs

-- with easy access to Central Book Stock for Home Reading (Branch Issue Department)

-- with easy access to the General Library Collection in the Present Building

-- with easy access to the Shipping and Receiving Room in the basement levels

Telephone Reference Service

-- with easy access to the Official Catalog and all Union Catalogs

-- with easy access to the General Reference Department

A Computer Room

-- for servicing the various units of the group of book processing departments

Book Purchasing Department

Book Preparation Department

-- to be immediately below the Book Processing Departments

-- within easy reach of Shipping and Receiving Section

Proposal for the New Building

Second Floor

(Southeast quadrant and along Blagden Street)

Personnel Quarters

-- Personnel Office

-- Staff Library

-- Committee rooms

-- Lounges

-- Lunchrooms

-- Retiring rooms

Publications Department

-- Editing

-- Production

-- Duplicating Section

Proposal for the New Building

Third Floor

(Southeast quadrant and along Blagden Street)

Trustees' Office

-- Trustees' Room

-- Trustees' Office

-- Trustees' Service Facilities

General Administrative Offices

-- Director

-- Assistant Directors

-- Chief Librarians

-- for Home Reading & Community Services

-- for Reference & Research Services

Business Offices

Accounting Department

Records, Files & Statistics

Computer Room

Proposal for the New Building

Basement Area

(Space on Levels 1-3 to be used as appropriate)

Internal Passageway

-- with direct connection on subway station level from the separate entrance on Boylston Street which serves the Auditorium, the Meeting Rooms, and the Large Exhibition Room

-- to lead directly to the Staff Facilities

Staff Facilities

-- staff locker rooms

-- staff toilets

-- staff retiring rooms

Off-Street Loading

Shipping and Receiving

-- on Blagden Street

-- at southeast section of the basement area

Stock and Supplies

-- adjacent to Shipping and Receiving Section

Superintendent of Library Buildings

Building Plans Center

Fire Control Center

Building Custodians

Watchmen

Maintenance Workmen & Shops

-- Carpenters

-- Painters

-- Electricians

Binding Department

Utilities

-- Light

-- Heat

-- Water

-- Air-conditioning